



"TO CARE FOR HIM WHO HAS BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND ORPHANS."

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CUMBERLAND GAP.

"THE GATEWAY TO THE CONFEDERACY" THREE TIMES CAPTURED.

Occupied by the Confederates—Invaded by United States Troops—Condition of the Garrison. The Summons to Surrender—Treason in the Camp—Correspondence. The Surrender.

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[CONCLUSION.]

The East Tennessee campaign of August and September, 1863, under the light of the record, embraces not only the movements of Gen. Rosecrans, but to an equal extent those of Gen. Burnside. The Army of the Ohio on duty in Kentucky consisted of the Ninth Corps, commanded by Maj.-Gen. J. G. Parke, and the Twenty-third Corps, under command of Maj.-Gen. George L. Hartsuff. The first of these corps numbered on August 20th, "present for duty, equipped"—infantry, 5,965; artillery, 298; total, 6,173. The Twenty-third Corps, composed of three divisions, numbered, infantry, 14,279; cavalry, 6,673; artillery, 1,462; total, 21,414. The first division of this corps, under command of Gen. Boyle, 6,357 men of all arms, was required for duty in guarding various military posts in Kentucky, leaving the remainder, 15,457, for offensive operations. The total effective strength of both corps was 21,630. The advance into East Tennessee commenced August 20th. Gen. Hartsuff's division moved from Crab Orchard, crossing the Cumberland at Smith's Ford; General White's division crossed at Jamestown, the cavalry and mounted infantry, Generals Carter and Shackelford and Colonels Foster and Woolford, moving in advance of each column. The two columns were ordered to concentrate after crossing the Cumberland Mountains near Huntsville, and move upon Montgomery in East Tennessee. From there the movements, as Burnside telegraphed Halleck, would be "according to circumstances, but probably upon Kingston and Loudon, as these seem to be the places to which General Rosecrans desires us to go in order to cooperate fully with him. At all events, our final destination will be Knoxville. We have had very serious difficulty to contend with in bad roads and short forage; in fact, the country is about destitute. We shall have still greater difficulties in that way to overcome, but if Rosecrans occupies the enemy fully and no troops are allowed to come down the road from Richmond, from the eastern army, I think we will be successful." The army arrived at Montgomery on the 1st of September, having encountered no opposition. There was nothing there to oppose it. Gen. Carter's cavalry division moved thence in three columns, one under Gen. Shackelford on Loudon bridge, one under Col. Byrd on Kingston, and one under Col. Foster on Knoxville.

Major-General Simon Bolivar Buckner, in command of the department of East Tennessee, had, in obedience to orders from the Confederate war department, gathered up all his available force, with the exception of 2,000 men under command of Brig.-Gen. John B. Frazer, who was left in defense of Cumberland Gap, and a few isolated detachments at Knoxville and other places under command of Brig.-Gen. Jackson, and formed a junction with Bragg's army at Chattanooga. Previous to leaving Knoxville Gen. Buckner wrote Maj.-Gen. Sam Jones, in command of the department of Western Virginia, requesting him to look after his department during his absence. Jones's headquarters were at Dublin, Va. He had his hands full taking care of Generals Averill and Semmum, who had on several occasions pushed their commands across the mountains from the north and the Kanawha Valley, and he was unable to look after his own department. In compliance with Buckner's request, however, he came down the road as far as Abingdon, when on the 6th of September he wrote Gen. Frazer, directing him to

BOLD CUMBERLAND GAP as long as possible, as reinforcements were then on the way from the East. The long line extending from Staunton, Va., to the Salt Works, over 200 miles, comprised in the department of Western Virginia, rendered it out of the power of Gen. Jones to reinforce him with his own troops. In compliance with the request of Gen. Jones General Lee returned to him one of his own brigades, commanded by Brig.-Gen. Wharton, which had been for several months on duty in the Army of Northern Virginia, and later another under command of Brig.-Gen. Corse. Gen. Jones's messenger reached Gen. Frazer too late to prevent his surrender, and 2,000 men were thus subtracted from the little force left to oppose the occupation of East Tennessee by the troops under Gen. Burnside.

The following extract from the returns of the army of Western Virginia and East Tennessee will show the troops actually on duty in East Tennessee from the 16th of September, at which date the brigade last-mentioned arrived.

Organization of the command of Maj.-Gen. Sam Jones in East Tennessee and Western Virginia in September, 1863:

Infantry Brigades.
Brig.-Gen. Corse (sent by Gen. Lee).—15th, 29th, and 30th Virginia.
Brig.-Gen. Jackson (Buckner's Corps).—Thomas's Legion, Walker's battalion.
Brig.-Gen. Wharton (at Salt Works).—51st Virginia; 30th Va. battalion; 45th Va.

Cavalry Brigades.
Brig.-Gen. W. E. Jones (made up from fragmentary commands).—21st Virginia cav-

alry; 27th, 34th, 36th, and 37th Virginia cavalry battalions.

Brig.-Gen. John S. Williams (one-half of the mounted).—64th Va. detached cav.; 1st Tenn. cav.; 4th Ky. cav.; May's Ky. cav. bat'n; 10th Ky. cav. bat'n; 16th Ga. cav. bat'n.

Artillery.
J. Floyd King.—Oley's Battery; Lowry's Battery; Ringgold's Battery; Davidson's Battery.

The effective total of the above command was, up to the 16th of September, about 4,000. Corse's brigade increased it to 5,180, and Wharton's brigade, 1,852 strong, was stationed at the Salt Works.

The force with which General Burnside confronted that of General Jones, above mentioned, was as follows:

Organization of the Army of the Ohio in East Tennessee September 10th, 1863, under Maj.-Gen. Burnside:

Twenty-third Army Corps, Maj.-Gen. Hartsuff.

Second Division, Gen. White.—Infantry.—1st Brigade, Col. O. H. Moore, 4 reg'ts; 2d Brigade, Col. M. W. Chapin, 4 reg'ts. Artillery, two batteries.

Third Division, Gen. Hascall.—Infantry.—1st Brigade, Col. S. A. Gilbert, 4 reg'ts; 2d Brigade, Col. D. Cameron, 4 reg'ts. Artillery, two batteries.

Fourth Division, Gen. S. P. Carter.—Cavalry and mounted infantry.—1st Brigade, Col. R. K. Byrd, 4 reg'ts; 2d Brigade, Gen. Shackelford, 5 reg'ts; 3d Brigade, Col. J. P. Carter, 4 reg'ts; Independent Brigade, Col. Frank Woolford, 3 reg'ts. Artillery, five batteries.

Reserve artillery, four batteries.

Ninth Army Corps, Maj.-Gen. Parke.

First Division, Gen. Ferrero.—1st Brigade, Col. Morrison; 2d Brigade, Col. Christ; 3d Brigade, Col. Leasure.

Second Division, Gen. Potter.—1st Brigade, Col. S. G. Griffin; 2d Brigade, Lieut.-Col. Shalt; 3d Brigade, Col. deCourcy. Artillery, two batteries.

Present for duty (equipped):

Twenty-third Army Corps.

Infantry 6,559
Mounted Infantry 3,123
Cavalry 3,436
Artillery 1,341

14,459

Ninth Army Corps.

Infantry 6,292
Artillery 111

6,403

Total U. S. troops in East Tenn. . . 21,732

The Ninth Corps reached Knoxville September 25th to 28th.

The cavalry expeditions from Montgomery were all successful. Kingston and Knoxville were taken without opposition, but at Loudon Bridge Decker's rear-guard was strongly posted. After a brisk skirmish they were driven back by Shackelford's command. The railroad bridge over the Holston, a fine structure, had been saturated with turpentine, and the guard no sooner retreated across it than it was committed to the flames. Colonel Byrd captured at Kingston a steamboat in process of construction, and communicated with Colonel Minty's pickets, who formed the extreme right flank of General Rosecrans's army.

Leaving Byrd's brigade, 3,000 strong, at Loudon and Athens, General Burnside pushed the remainder of the Twenty-third Corps on to Knoxville. Buckner had left Knoxville the day before Colonel Foster's arrival, leaving behind him a small force to guard a considerable quantity of quartermaster stores, the Government work-shops, and a large quantity of salt, which fell into Foster's hands. General Burnside reached the city on the 3d. The East Tennessee troops, separated for many weary months from their families, were greeted with expressions of the tenderest affection by the people all along the line of march. National flags were brought out from their hiding places and flung to the breeze from nearly every house. There was little use for army rations—a feast awaited the troops at every village. Women stood by the roadside with buckets of water, fruit, and cakes, which they gave freely, refusing all offers of pay. As they drew near Knoxville, the city was radiant with flags. Sixty young ladies took their places by the roadside, waving flags and shouting "Hurrah for the Union!" Ladies came out of their houses to greet Generals Burnside and Carter. Seizing their hands they wept for joy, crying "Welcome to East Tennessee." Hundreds of people of both sexes and all ages collected in a few minutes, and both General Burnside and General Carter addressed them, promising that they should not again be deserted to their enemies. The demonstrations were not boisterous, but the intense joy imparted by these tidings were exhibited in quiet rejoicing. Men who for months had been hidden in caves in the hills and in mountain fastnesses came in and were overjoyed at their deliverance. The halt at Knoxville was very brief. On the 5th General Shackelford with his brigade, 1,434 strong, was sent in the direction of Cumberland Gap to cut off escape by the force in occupation of that stronghold, and on the 7th General Burnside left Knoxville with two regiments of cavalry, two of mounted infantry, and Konkle's battery, and joined Shackelford on the 9th. Colonel de Courcy, who had advanced with his brigade of the Ninth Corps, two infantry regiments, two of cavalry, and a battery of artillery via London, Ky., 1834 strong, had by this time taken position on the north, and

SUMMONED THE GARRISON TO SURRENDER, which demand was refused. The garrison was composed of four regiments of infantry from North Carolina, one from Virginia, and one from Georgia, one regiment of East Tennessee cavalry, two field batteries, and three guns in position. General Buckner stopped long enough on his way to Chattanooga to telegraph General Frazer from Loudon on

the 30th of August to evacuate the Gap with all speed, to burn and destroy everything that could not be transported, and to report to General Sam Jones at Abingdon, Va., 125 miles distant. As General Frazer was led to believe that East Tennessee was to be held by the Confederates, and knowing the importance of the Gap in this event, he at once construed the telegram of the 30th to be a trick of the Yankees, and replied to it in cipher, stating his condition for defense. He had over 2,000 men and forty days' rations, and believed he could hold the position, but asked to be informed if he should still evacuate. The response to this dispatch came on the following day ordering him to hold his position. This order was countermanded by General Bragg at Chattanooga, but as telegraphic communication with Frazer had been cut off in the meantime no order to evacuate the Gap reached him before the investment of the place on the 6th of September. The defenses, about two miles in extent, required a reliable force of about 7,000 men and appropriate artillery to properly man. Batteries of light guns were placed in position to command the three roads converging at the Gap, but owing to the tortuous course of the roads they had range of not over four hundred yards, except on the south, where they had full sweep to the extent of their range. The guns were 6-pounder smooth-bores and 12-pounder howitzers. The First Tennessee Confederate cavalry, under command of Colonel J. B. Carter, an active and efficient regiment about 600 strong, was sent out to reconnoitre in the direction of Knoxville, where it encountered General Shackelford's advance and was driven into Powell's Valley, when by Frazer's order it continued up the valley on the Virginia road and reported to General Williams. The Sixth-second and Sixty-fourth North Carolina were conscripts, and were thoroughly imbued with Union sentiments. The colonel of the Sixty-second was absent. He soon after resigned and became an open advocate of the Union. His men were accustomed to declare that they had never fired a gun at a Union man and they never would. Three hundred of the Sixty-fourth North Carolina had already deserted in a body, and the regiment was small, but under better discipline than the Sixty-second. The Fifty-fifth Georgia had about 500 men for duty. It had been on provost-marshal duty at Knoxville, and was regarded as tolerably good, although the men

RODE THEIR COLONEL ON A RAIL and only allowed him to resume command on promise of better behavior. He and the lieutenant-colonel were both absent and Major Printup was in command. Colonel Slemmons's Virginia regiment and Burnside's battalion joined Frazer from Marshall's command on the last of August. For insubordination and inefficiency this regiment had no equal in either army. To add, if possible, to the difficulties with which General Frazer had to contend his predecessor in command had allowed the roof of the powder magazine to go to decay, and on examination most of it was found to be saturated with rain water. A requisition had been made for an additional supply, which the Ordnance office at Knoxville had duly procured and failed to fill. The only drinking water upon which the garrison had to rely was obtained at a spring in the valley on the south side of the Gap near a mill, which, later, when run to its full capacity ground wheat about as fast as the men could eat the flour. News of the capture of Loudon and the burning of the railroad bridge was followed by the intelligence of the capture of Knoxville, and rightly surmising that the next move would be upon Cumberland Gap, the commander at once made arrangements for defense. A device for conveying water to the top of the hill by means of telegraph wires was designed, but failed in construction for lack of material. Oxen were put to hauling it up in barrels, but broke down on the second trip. It was then determined that the spring and mill must be guarded, and 150 men of the Sixty-second North Carolina were detailed for this duty, but were put to flight by 100 of Shackelford's cavalry, who dashed down upon the mill and burned it on the night of their arrival. The condition of the beleaguered garrison was now critical in the extreme, and it was only necessary for the two brigades, one on the north and the other on the south, to put on a bold front, concealing their real strength, to insure the surrender of the stronghold. On the 6th Colonel Carter had reported that the force advancing from Knoxville had steadily driven him, and that he had reason to believe it to be very strong. On the 7th General Shackelford sent the following communication to General Frazer:

HEADQUARTERS U. S. FORCES IN FRONT OF CUMBERLAND GAP,
September 7th, 1863.

TO GEN. FRAZER, commanding Confederate forces, Cumberland Gap:

"You are surrounded by my forces. In order to save the effusion of blood and the unnecessary loss of life, I demand the unconditional surrender of yourself and command by 3 o'clock, inst. I am, General,

"Very respectfully,

"J. M. SHACKELFORD,

"Brigadier-General Commanding."

To which General Frazer made answer, as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS CUMBERLAND GAP,
September 7th, 1863.

"TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL SHACKELFORD, Commanding U. S. Forces:

"I have just received your note of to-day demanding the unconditional surrender of myself and forces. In reply, I have simply to state that I must decline acceding thereto. I am, General,

"Very respectfully, J. W. FRAZER,

"Brigadier-General."

Similar proposals were made on the fol-

lowing day, both by Shackelford on the south, and de Courcy on the north, which were met by a polite refusal to comply. General Burnside arrived at General Shackelford's headquarters on the night of the 8th, and on the morning of the 9th sent the following note to General Frazer:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE OHIO,
September 9th, 1863.

"BRIGADIER-GENERAL FRAZER, Commanding Confederate Forces, Cumberland Gap.

"GENERAL: As ample time has been given for negotiation, you will be kind enough to dismiss at once from your lines our flags of truce, from both sides of the Gap, and cease communication with any of the United States forces, excepting through myself, as none other will be considered valid. At the same time, with the view of avoiding the effusion of blood, I beg to state that I have a force present with me sufficient, in all human probability, to carry your position, and should your reply not be satisfactory shall commence operations, with the view of assailing your position at such points and with such forces as I may deem proper, immediately on the return of the officer carrying this note, who has permission to remain one hour at your pickets. I am, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

"A. E. BURNSIDE, Major-General.

"Major Van Buren, Aide-de-Camp on my staff, will be the bearer hereof."

On receipt of this peremptory demand from the major-general commanding the department, whose presence at that remote point indicated that he had nothing to fear from the Confederate forces in East Tennessee, General Frazer wisely concluded that all hope of success was cut off. General Jones's courier, bearing an urgent appeal from that officer to hold the Gap at all hazards, arrived and was closely questioned. In answer to General Frazer's question, the courier stated that he had passed Carter's cavalry in camp at Jonesville, 36 miles eastward, on the road from Abingdon, Va. In his letter General Jones promised success if he could hold out until it reached him, and that he could rely upon anything the courier would communicate. Replying to the interrogatories of General Frazer, the man said no troops had arrived at Abingdon when he left, and that General Jones had not been informed of the condition of things in East Tennessee. General Frazer now perceived that he had to rely upon his own resources. He might have gained a reputation for courage by agreeing to the last, and the fearful loss of life in his command would be credited to him as an evidence of his gallantry. He says: "I thus perceived that my command could effect nothing by a temporary resistance, and that I could I even hope to 'cut my way out' and attempt an escape up the valley I should be thwarted in my attempt without artillery or cavalry, as the enemy had a formidable force of these arms, and could cut up and capture my force in detail. I also reflected that such a step, if partially successful, would draw the enemy towards Abingdon and probably result in extending their operations to that place, when a surrender of the Gap would probably satisfy his desire for conquest at that time. * * * I have since regretted that I did not assemble a council of war and have the vote of each officer taken and recorded on the question of surrender. Every one I spoke to at the time said we could do no better. The officers and the regiments and batteries had had little experience in battle or siege, and added to all these causes, the recent reverses at Vicksburg, Port Hudson, and Gettysburg, as well as the character of the letters and papers received from their homes, had a most demoralizing effect upon the men."

The artillery horses had, like those in the cavalry, been sent out of the Gap for want of forage, and the artillery could not be removed. The men in the regiments could not be relied upon in a fight. There was no reason to believe that Gen. Jones had a sufficient force to make good his promise of relief. There was scarcity of drinking water for one day's fight and none for a siege. A retreat up the valley could end only in disaster, and all his officers advised surrender. To Gen. Burnside's demand for immediate and unconditional surrender he returned the following note:

"HEADQUARTERS CUMBERLAND GAP,
September 9, 1863.

"TO GENERAL A. E. BURNSIDE,
Commanding U. S. Forces.

"GENERAL: As my communications with Gen. Shackelford and Col. de Courcy will show, I intended contending the position, but will surrender on condition that the officers and men of my command be released on parole.

"I am, General, very respectfully,

"J. W. FRAZER, Brig.-Gen."

This proposal was refused by General Burnside, and the result was the unconditional surrender of the Gap with all its garrison and munitions.

The Confederate flags were lowered and white flags were hoisted in their place. Pending negotiations Col. de Courcy had withdrawn his left flank from a position commanding the road eastward and about one hundred officers and men escaped. For this neglect Col. de Courcy was placed in temporary arrest and Col. Lemert assumed command of the brigade, which was stationed at the Gap and a detachment made from it to guard prisoners to the rear. The force surrendered consisted of 2,300 officers and men. About 40 wagons, 4,000 pounds of bacon, 2,000 bushels of wheat, 13 pieces of artillery, and a large quantity of equipment was surrendered with the command.

The information of the Confederate authorities at Richmond was very meagre upon the East Tennessee affairs, as would appear from the following extract from President Davis's message to Congress relating to the military operations in that section.

He says: "By the surrender of Cumberland Gap the enemy effected an entrance into East Tennessee and severed the connection between that State and Virginia, and profiting by his easy success pushed boldly on Chattanooga and compelled its evacuation." The "president" should have known that both Chattanooga and Knoxville were in possession of the Federal forces before Cumberland Gap was taken, and that the force which captured it had nothing whatever to do with the evacuation of Chattanooga.

Gen. Frazer was held a prisoner for many months at Johnson's Island, whence he was removed to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, where, on the 27th of November, 1864, he wrote the report of his surrender. He was severely criticised by Mr. Davis for what the latter termed "the unaccountable surrender of Cumberland Gap," but is given credit for his conduct in his book.

Colonel de Courcy was released from arrest on the 10th of September, relieved from duty in the department, and ordered to join his regiment, the Sixteenth Ohio, at New Orleans.

Brigadier-General S. P. Carter, whose faithful and persistent efforts in behalf of the Union people of East Tennessee were rewarded by witnessing their joy at their deliverance from Confederate persecution, was appointed Provost Marshal-General of East Tennessee, with headquarters at Knoxville. General Carter left the splendid division which he had organized and led to victory, with great regret, and at once entered upon the duties of his office.

This was Cumberland Gap, one of the strongest positions on the continent, the natural gateway to the confederacy, capable of being made impregnable against any force that could be sent against it, twice abandoned and once surrendered without firing a gun in its defense.

THE COMING GREAT COMET.

If the comet that was discovered by a young astronomer in Albany a week ago fulfills half of the promises made for it, we may expect to behold, in May or June, a celestial spectacle such as has not been equalled since 1858 or 1811. This comet, although some two hundred million miles from its perihelion, which it will not reach for three months, shows a bright tail and a star-like nucleus. The inference is fair that the comet is a very large one, and that it will present a magnificent appearance. Moreover, Prof. Chandler's figures show that the comet is plunging almost straight at the sun, which it will probably approach within one hundred thousand miles. The only other comets in the long list of those bodies whose orbits have been calculated, which approached anything like as near to the sun as this are the comet of 370 B. C., the comet of 1680, often called Newton's comet, the comet of 1843, and the comet of 1880. The last-named was observed only in South America and Australia and at the Cape of Good Hope. Concerning the comet of 370 B. C., of which frightful things are related, and which is said to have split in two, not much is known, but the measurements made in the other cases are generally to be depended upon. In fact, it was the nearness of the approach of the comet of 1680 which led Newton to anticipate possible peril to the earth from the fall of a great comet into the sun. This is not the popular view of the danger from comets, the fear usually being that they may strike the earth, or produce pestilence by mingling the substance of their tails with our atmosphere. Of late, the other view has been made more conspicuous, especially since Mr. Proctor's recent article on what he calls the menacing comet of 1880, which he anticipates may return in 1897.

AN INCIDENT OF GENERAL KEIFER'S WAR RECORD.

The following incident is told of General Keifer, the new Speaker of the National House of Representatives: Immediately succeeding the desperate conflict at Sailer's Creek (General Keifer was the principal actor in the affair which nearly cost him his life), while assisting with the reformation of troops, information reached him that a body of the enemy was concealed in the woods on his right. He rode into the woods to reconnoitre in person, where, after proceeding a short distance, to his surprise he came suddenly upon Confederate troops lying on the ground, evidently ignorant of the surrender that had just taken place. The approaching night, together with the density of the woods and the smoke of battle, saved him from instant identification. To attempt hastily to withdraw would have led to his recognition and probable death. The idea of surrender did not occur to him. He resorted to a ruse. In a loud tone he gave the command, "Forward," and waved his sword toward the recent scene of battle. This command was promptly obeyed. The faster he moved the faster the enemy followed, until all reached the edge of the woods, where the better light enabled them to see his uniform. Instantly a number of muskets were leveled at him, and but for the prompt command "Don't fire," from the Confederate commander, who rushed forward, striking up the guns, he must have fallen. General Keifer, amid the confusion, dashed away at full run to his own command, and caused it to charge forward, and leading the advance, he demanded and received the surrender of the whole body of men, who proved to be a marine brigade, little used to land service, commanded by Commodore J. R. Tucker, since chief admiral of the Peruvian navy. Captain John D. Somers and about thirty-five other officers also capitulated. Tucker and Semmes each claimed to have saved his life. General Keifer afterward, as an act of gratitude, used his influence to obtain the parole of these officers, who, having deserted the United States navy, were not entitled under the orders to parole.

STEPHEN A. HURLBUT.

HIS MILITARY, CONGRESSIONAL, AND DIPLOMATIC SERVICES.

His Sad Death at the Post of Duty.—The Base Attempt to Involve Him in the Cheek Swindle.—A Telephatic Vindication.—Arrival of His Remains in the City of New York.

The death of Major-General Stephen A. Hurlbut, of Illinois, at Lima, Peru, on the 27th of March last, recalls four years of faithful and efficient service in the field performed by him during the war of the rebellion, and a life of devoted loyalty to the highest interests of his native land. Mr. Hurlbut was appointed brigadier-general on the 17th day of May, 1861; major-general September 17, 1862, and honorably mustered out of service in June, 1865.

On July 4th, 1861, General Hurlbut, then at Belvidere, Illinois, was, by special orders from headquarters Department of the Ohio, assigned to command of troops at Quincy, Illinois. Here it became his duty to hold the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad, constantly threatened by guerrillas in Missouri. General Hurlbut remained in command in northwestern Missouri, pursuing a vigorous warfare upon Confederate troops and partisan rangers, until January, 1862, when he was assigned to command of Benton Barracks, at St. Louis. Here his excellent administrative ability attracted the attention of General Halleck, who, in March, assigned him to command of the Fourth Division, Army of the Tennessee, with which he proceeded to Pittsburg Landing. On the morning of the 6th of April, General Albert Sidney Johnston assaulted the front line, and in the furious attack, extending all along the line, drove back the left brigade of General Sherman's division, gaining access to his rear. General Prentiss in the center, and General Sherman with two brigades on the right and one on the extreme left, held their positions stubbornly, reinforced by troops from the divisions of Generals Mcclernand, Hurlbut, and W. H. L. Wallace, in the rear, for four hours, when they fell back and a new line was formed with Sherman on the right and Mcclernand, Wallace, Prentiss, and Hurlbut in succession towards the left. The abandoned camps of the divisions in front presented so many attractions to the soldiers of the Confederate army that it became necessary to give them time to gorge themselves upon the unaccustomed luxuries of a Union camp. This delay in following up their success gave time to the Union generals to form their line, and when finally at two o'clock General Johnston advanced to the attack his troops were repulsed. Reforming his lines and bringing forward the hordes of stragglers who still lingered about the abandoned camps, General Johnston, at four o'clock, ordered a charge along the whole line, leading the right centre in person. The result of this charge was the death of Johnston himself, and of W. H. L. Wallace; the capture of Prentiss, forcing the entire line back into the swamps of Snake Creek, on the right, and back to the bluff above the landing, upon the left.

General Hurlbut had early in the morning, in response to General Sherman's requisition for troops, sent Colonel Veatch's brigade to report to him for duty. His two remaining brigades, commanded by Brigadier-General Lauman, and Colonel Williams, of the Third Iowa, were formed in rear of the open space between Prentiss's division and Stewart's brigade on the left, and successfully repulsed every assault that was made upon their lines. When Prentiss and Stewart at length fell back, Prentiss formed his shattered command upon the right of Lauman's brigade, where the new line was formed. In the meantime, Stewart's brigade had fallen back in line on Hurlbut's left. The final assault fell heaviest upon Wallace and Prentiss at an angle in the line which the Confederates called the Hornet's Nest. Their best brigades were hurled against the Federals in several successive charges, but were each time repulsed with immense loss. The charge upon Stewart's brigade was stronger than he could resist with his ranks depleted by five hours' incessant fighting, and he sent a message to General Hurlbut that he would be compelled to fall back. This would effectively uncover the road to the landing, besides exposing to capture a battery of heavy guns formed under the superintendence of Colonel Webster to protect it. It was necessary for Hurlbut to decide at once whether to break his connection with Prentiss or permit his line to be flanked on the left. It was a moment of extreme peril. To withdraw Lauman's brigade from Prentiss's support would produce a break in the line that would be taken immediate advantage of by the vigilant enemy pressing upon every part of the line. General Hurlbut chose to protect his left flank, and ordered Lauman quickly from right to left. He was not a moment too soon, for General Breckinridge, with his reserves, was pressing forward in accordance with General Johnston's plan to gain position between the Union army and the river. The enemy followed closely in occupation of the ground vacated by Lauman and Wallace's division giving way at the same moment, left Prentiss without support on either flank. He was at once surrounded and captured, with 2,000 of his command. Lauman was joined at the heavy batteries on the extreme left by Ammen's brigade of Nelson's division, and, after a brisk engagement, the Confederates withdrew, to renew the fight the next day. There is no doubt that the immediate action of General Hurlbut in transferring his right brigade to the left in time to check Breckinridge's advancing column, saved the capture of the landing, and insured the safe arrival of Duell's army, which